ted to the Central Government employees so as to bring it at par with that prevailing in various public sector undertakings| banks;

(b) if so, by when and if not, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government also propose to provide more funds to various Ministries| Departments towards building advance so as to cater to the maximum number of applicants for house building advance in Ministries/Departments?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EXPENDITURE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI B. K. GADHVI): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The rates of interest charged on House Building Advance to Government employees are already concessional as these are less than the average rate of Government borrowings.

(c) The provision of funds has increased from Rs. 85 crores in 1987-88 to Rs. 115 crores in 1988-89 and Rs. 125 crores in 1989-90 (BE).

Buying of cotton by NTC

434. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Textile Corporation is buying cotton from Chief Controller of Imports only or from private traders also;

(b) what was the earlier practice and whether there is any change in the practice, if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether complaints have been received from the workers with regard to bad quality of cotton supplied to them resulting into lower production; if so, what are the remedial measures taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI RAFIQUE ALAM): (a) and (b) The Chief Controller of Imports does not sell cotton. National Textile Corporation is buying cotton mostly from institutional suppliers viz. Cotton Corporation of India, Maharashtra Cotton Federation, Markfed, Hafed and other State level Cotton Federations and Cotton Cooperatives. NTC is also buying cotton from private traders to the maximum extent of 30 per cent of its total requirements. This arrangement is in operation for sometime and no change has been made recently.

(c) No, Sir.

Harassment of Tihar Jail Officials

435.. SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA JAYAWANTRAO PATIL: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 3609 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 30th March, 1989 and state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Mr. Saini was not relieved by the Tihar Jail Officials during the period from 13th January, 1987 to 10th February, 1987 with an intention to harass him; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons for not relieving him and what action has been taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

436. [*Transferred to the 8th May, 1989*]

Price situation

437. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Price Situation causing concern" which appeared in the Statesman, Calcutta edition on the 6th March, 1989; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) and (b) The news item under refer-